

# The Republican.

No. 2, Vol. 9.] LONDON, Friday, Jan. 9, 1824. [PRICE 6d.]

## TO THE REPUBLICANS OF THE ISLAND OF ALBION.

Dorchester Gaol, Jan. 1, 1824, of  
CITIZENS, the last of the Gods.

THE approach of the 29th of this month, the birth-day of Thomas Paine, induces me to address you. The celebration was well done last year, in most of the leading cities and towns, and I hope to hear of an improvement in the present. The enemies of the name of Thomas Paine, the enemies of honesty, truth, and human improvement, have all but ceased to calumniate this great man, this most useful of all men who have yet lived. Now and then, I notice a repeated lie, a lurking attack, creeping out in different parts of the country; but all the thousands, the millions of religious tract calumnies upon him have done nothing more than to excite an enquiry, "why all this abuse of Thomas Paine, a man of whom many of us have heard and know nothing?" His "Age of Reason" is creeping into every corner of this country; and wherever it reaches, the propagators of calumny upon his name do but find that they have whetted the appetite for examination, and have assisted to stimulate *the thoughtless to think*. They may spend their thousands of pounds in the year for the propagation of this religious abuse, by tracts, by preachings, or in whatever way they please; but they will find that all is but a war against themselves—that nothing will satisfy those who can read, but a free discussion upon all subjects which come under their notice. They may make a million of fanatics, or two millions of furious persecutors out of an ignorant multitude, but of what avail, when we can oppose to them an equal number of reasonable and reasoning men? One intelligent man with a pen, or a tongue, is a match for any number of ignorant opponents. Knowledge is a principle not to be combated—no powers can hinder its increase and developement.

Printed and Published by R. Carlile, 84, Fleet Street.

Our opponents are invited to that good fellowship which consists in mutual instruction: our cause, our principles do not require that we should insult them or abuse their notions—we will reason with them—we will examine and answer all they can say against us, if they will but meet us in the spirit of free and fair discussion.

Republicans—the world is our lesson—our country our text book—whilst we are learning to know and to benefit the one, the other claims our close attention and is a sort of centre for all our projects and discourses. Know then that the prospects of Republicans go on to brighten all over the face of the earth; and the Holy Alliance itself is doubtful how best to act—whether to respect or not to respect the growing Republics of the vast Americas. If in Spain and Portugal a Constitutional Monarchy has been overthrown, Monarchy, in the aggregate, has gained no advantage from it. Real Republicanism is a principle not to be conquered. It flourishes amidst the very weeds of Monarchy, and has the virtue to draw off all their support to kill their roots even whilst their heads look fair.

RICHARD CARLILE.

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NOTE.—Mr. Watson has marked no less than 21 errors made by the printer in his last letter; but having got into a new volume we must decline printing them. We trust that we have at length obtained a more careful and competent reader.

EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE REPUBLICAN.

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SIR,

London, Dec. 9, 1823.

AFTER what you have said, Mr. Editor, yourself in answer to J. E. C. it might appear unnecessary to continue the debate upon the subject of discussion; but that the believers in the existence of immaterial beings, or divine and devilish essences, may be convinced that their ignis fatuus notions, about disembodied spirits, and that their arguments, however specious or metaphysical they may be, are fallacious and refutable, and as the refutation of the arguments used by J. E. C., may assist the great cause of TRUTH, which is identified with NATURE, I will proceed to my task, of combating arguments, wielded by J. E. C. with a giant's power.

Relying on the sacred but simple principles of truth, and the laws of nature, I trust I shall be able to aim a blow at the front of his



lofty reasoning, and lay prostrate all his mighty arguments: although I feel I am but a stripling in disputation.

J. E. C. has said, that I had "launched into an elaborate description of the processes of nature;" this may be true, and it may be equally true, that a tenth part of what I have said might have been sufficient to have refuted the first dogma of theologians, that, *there is a God*; to prove that *there is no God*, such as has ever yet been attempted to be described from the time of Moses to Mahomet.

In truth, after the dogma has been so often and so ably refuted, it does appear that all reasoning upon it, and especially upon all the minor dogmas arising out of the leading one, is superfluous; but were Materialists to treat the really elaborate arguments of their opponents, as laconically as the subject merits, they might render themselves liable to the imputation of dogmatism and conceit.

If my descriptions of the processes of nature were indeed elaborate or irksome to the theologians, I may be allowed "*en passant*," to observe how infinitely more laboured and lengthened may be deemed the arguments which have been used by theologians in their attempts to prove the existence of an all-ruling, controuling and creating spirit.

What immense piles of volumes, have been written in support of their leading and favourite hypothesis, I say *hypothesis*, for deny it as they may, their declarations, and arguments all resolve themselves into supposition, or, at most, into assumption.

If a God there really is, and if it is or ever was necessary to mankind, to know the fact, it may fairly and rationally be asked, why does he not make himself known to each succeeding generation, without leaving myriads of human beings, to perplex themselves, upon a subject they can never decide without some natural and visible manifestation of person or property, however laboured may be their research, and though they argue the question ten thousand more years.

Seeing, as it is said, that God takes such especial care of mankind, as to number their very hairs, and that he has placed man at the head of all intelligent beings on this globe, it appears rather singular, to those who dare think upon the subject, that he should suffer the paragon man, the nonpareil of animals, to remain so ignorant and perplexed, bewildering themselves age after age with disputations upon divine essences, powers and attributes; when a scroll, stretched but a thousand leagues, along the blue expanse, might daily make known, the grand secrets, and quiet the perturbed spirit of fruitless enquiry, and a calm produce, highly necessary to the heated minds of metaphysicians, visionaries and bigots.

However, as theologians still persist in pursuing an ignis fatuus, will not give up the contest, but still continue to "wheel their

flight around, like the swallows on a summer's eve, catching gnats on the surface of the waters," and will never "rest," but in the vertigo of their brain; will continue to soar with delirious pertinacity, into the unknown regions of space, in search of an imaginary something, which, like a fairy sylph, pleases a dreamer's fancy; and if they will still urge argument upon argument, to prove their phantom a reality; why should not the MATERIALISTS amuse themselves, from the citadel of reason, and from the battlements of science and common sense, in contending with their antagonists, with arguments supported by science, nature, and the reality of things?

J. E. C. seems to take an exception to my expression, that if some parts of organized matter primarily proceeded from design (and evinced divine wisdom) there are other parts that shew the artificer to have been a great bungler, and then says J. E. C. "thus he (myself) promptly decides, and thus, would"

"Teach eternal wisdom how to rule."

And why not? Eternity is not wisdom, nor does it follow, that eternal wisdom, is perfect wisdom; superstitious visionaries may be alarmed by sound, and terrified from reasoning by words without meaning; but those that will reflect, and will without prejudice examine the Jew Book, will discover, that according to its history "eternal wisdom" was far from being infallible; why not then comment upon imperfections, which in many instances are therein recorded; wherein the God of the Jews, is often described as having repented of his works; his commands oft revoked, and by priests, prophets, and seers was oft admonished of decisions and judgments wrongly formed or made; which are strong confirmations of the decision to which I so "*promptly*" came.

If J. E. C. or any of his class of reasoners, can prove to my mind, that an all-wise, all-perfect, all-beneficent almighty author, or maker of all things, does exist; no mind would be more disposed to hold him in profound reverence.

The ideas I entertain of what should be the qualities of a maker and director of the universe, are infinitely more exalted, than any thing that I have met with, in any book revelation; and although I have freely discussed the opinions of theists and theologians, and boldly asserted my own, in opposition to theirs; I would not have it thought, that I defy all rules of decency; or that an impious spirit possess, to transgress all moral principles and decorum.

My opinion is, that theologians, in general, greatly dishonour their imaginary supreme divinity in depriving him of that perfect wisdom, which I consider an eternal, almighty, designing author of matter, mind and motion, should possess—if their God is omni-beneficent, how do they account for evil, and punishment? If he is omnipotent, how do they account for sin, the Devil, and



misery? If he is all-goodness and all-powerful, as they pretend he is, would he not have made all things perfect, and thus have prevented sin and evil? A little further on, if I comprehend J. E. C. rightly, I find, he either misunderstands my argument, or perverts it intentionally, substituting a mode of argument in answer not authorized by my reasoning; thus throwing confusion upon the subject, which without explanation, might render me ridiculous in the opinion of those who read only his side of the question.

To disentangle the argument, from the cloudy obscurity it is thrown into by J. E. C., I shall find it necessary to quote his language, sentence by sentence, to answer them *seriatim*, and for the sake of perspicuity to number them; as I proceed; and then I almost despair of "eliciting sufficient light to make" the "darkness visible."

No. 1, "Mr. Watson has further on said, that all which I. G. has stated of the animals he cites appearing to be the effect of design, is founded in truth," for, that it "does *appear* to the circumscribed minds of such persons, that animated nature and the universe came into existence from the design of some intelligent power," but it *only appears* so to them. He (Mr. Watson) then launches into an elaborate description of the processes of nature, and complains, that they (those circumscribed minds) are unwilling to allow, that *passive effects* can produce a vital cause.

2. That which is *dependant* and *powerless* has power to produce that which is independant and powerful; that they will not allow matter, undesigning matter, to produce intellect.

3. For that very *ridiculous* reason because she is not possessed of it herself, they roughly or roundly asserting that to produce it she must have it to produce.

4. He (Mr. W.) virtually complains, that their reason is so circumscribed, it will not allow that to be a *primary cause* which acts without design; because, if without design it acts by compulsion.

5. And for shortly saying, intelligence must preside, or all would be effects without a cause, compulsion without a power to compel.

6. These objections he avers are only made by men of limited or circumscribed minds, the learned and men of science scout them.

7. The learned and men of science adopting the impossible side of the question; a side which common sense flies from.

8. Thus is exemplified the advantages of free discussion, by developing the base on which they (men of learning and science) "erect the learned and boasted opinion or doctrine of Atheism."

9. And the little advantage the learned have, over the unlearned, with respect to their most *vital* interests.

10. The latter (the unlearned) going a short and strait road, to

the end; while the former (the learned) by the multitude of their turnings are confused, embarrassed, and lost.

Paragraph, Number 1. being little more than introductory to J. E. C.'s syllogistical criticism, or, more properly, his perversion of argument, I need only observe, that in no part of my letters, can I discover, that I assert, admit or imply, that the processes of nature are *passive*; on the contrary, my arguments constantly tend to shew that the combined operations of the *elements* are *always* active; and are themselves, therefore, the *cause* which produces *vital effects* upon organized and animalized matter.

No. 2. being uninfluenced by any supernatural power *are* INDEPENDANT and POWERFUL, having the power, by their combined forces or actions to produce things, which are dependant, limited in power, influenced by other causes and by surrounding circumstances, subject to constant changes, from the operations of the elements, by the modifications and organization of which certain portions of matter become more or less animate, sensitive, and intelligent.

No. 3. For the plain reason, that it is a property of nature, that some portions of matter, by the operations of the elements conjointly, form themselves into combinations, of class, genera, and species, to become organized, to think and to exercise all the functions of the senses; by understanding which we come to see, that it is *ridiculous* to search for supernatural powers, to produce intellect; when, by examining closely into the laws of nature, or the operations of matter upon itself, or of the elements upon themselves, it may rationally be concluded, that intellect is as much a part, and principle of nature, a property of matter, as motion and extension; and, therefore, were men of circumscribed minds "*roughly and roundly*" to assert, that matter produces intellect, even though they reasoned not, or were without learning, they would stumble on the truth.

No. 4. Numerous are the operations of nature, which act without design; all the changes, which take place in mineral and vegetable substances, are natural processes without design.

Even in the production of animals—design has little or nothing to do: the process of generating one animal from another, is a natural process. No motive to propagate their species influences any animals in their sexual connections: it is sensual desire, and not design, which stimulates them to action, a desire to gratify a lustful passion or appetite is the primary cause of life, but the desire proceeds neither from design nor compulsion of any foreign body, but arises in consequence of an appetency which resides inherently in animally organized matter.

The fruit of carnal connection, or the progeny produced, indeed comes into existence without its own consent, from necessity, or by compulsion, but without design, either on



its own part or its parent—the begetting the animal, the breeding of it, in the matrix and the parturition, are all processes of nature, as distinct as are the operations which are carried forward in the production of vegetable substances.

Many of the causes, which produce certain effects in the progress of animals through life, originate without design, which may be designated by *involuntary stimuli*.

Others originate from design; the animal may perform acts, which are compulsory, involuntary, voluntary, and of free will, in consequence of motives and sensations arising within itself, inherent to its nature, without any reference, to a supposed almighty designing power.

No. 5 and 6. I maintain, that intelligence, *needs not necessarily preside* as a primary cause in the production of an effect: innumerable cases occur, in the operations of nature, in which effects arise from causes, in which, I repeat, no intelligence has been concerned, which is denied only by men of limited, ignorant, circumscribed, prejudiced or bigotted minds; and when so denied, I maintain, that most scientific, learned and honest men *scout* their ignorance, pertinacity and obstinacy; to elucidate my argument, would be an offence against common sense—as an answer to J. E. C., I will say, that intelligence does not *preside*, when a tree is shivered by lightening, we behold the effect and know the cause was unconnected with design.

No. 8. “Thus is exemplified the advantage of free discussion by developing the base on which” men of science and Materialists, combat the spurious doctrines of Priests, about supernatural agencies, immaterial beings, disembodied spirits and divine essences.

No. 9. “And the little advantage” metaphysicians, learned in the languages, and the lore of mystery, have over men of plain understanding, and common sense, at all acquainted with the principles of science, the processes of nature, and free from prejudice and superstition.

No. 10. The latter, content to be no wiser than nature, and truth, or the reality of things allow; investigate the operations, carried forward upon the elements of ever-changing matter; take the “short and straight” course by observation, experiment, and experience to endeavour to explore the still unexplored and hitherto unknown causes, which sustain all things and which produce life, mind and motion; while metaphysicians and mystery-mongers “by the multitude of their turnings,” and visionary flights of fancy, o’er-leap the bounds of nature, soar into unknown regions of space in search of imaginary beings; non-entities, things of no substance, without parts, organs, or passions; would make credulous minds believe, that they are wiser than other men, would wish them to rely on the “baseless fabric” of their visionary speculations; and to neglect the cultivation of knowledge,

to be derived from the study of nature and science; to be "confused and embarrassed" in the mazes of sophistry, revealed religion, mystery and miracle.

"It is deplorable to contemplate the errors we poor mortals are liable to slide into, if we *do not* narrowly examine every place on which we set our foot."

"A Daniel, a second Daniel.

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

"It is lamentable" to see literary acquirements prostituted to superstition; men of highly cultivated minds, engaged in perverting truth, to support priestcraft, by metaphysical sophistry and subtlety; when they might be more usefully employed, in unravelling and elucidating, the laws and processes of nature, instead of enlisting on the side of mystery, fiction, fraud and "absurdity."

J. E. C. next proceeds to enquire, what we are enquiring about, namely, the existence or non existence of an *intelligent almighty* power, and then "promptly decides" "*en passant*," that an almighty power, without intelligence is an absurdity," or an anomaly, and thus "joins issue," instantly with the opinions, I had expressed in my letters in answer to I. G., and immediately, reasons upon the subject in saying, "It is a free power under restriction, possessing all without all; or possessing all, yet lacking, that which is most vital and important, and without which, perhaps you will find there exists no power at all."

Before commenting upon this learned paragraph let us settle about the word *power*, and in doing so, we may advance another step in proving, that there is "no power at all," such as is invoked by theologians.

"They may call spirits from the vasty deep,"

But not one will ascend the yawning steep.

And though their votaries preach, plead, and pray,

They are perversely deaf to all they say,

The sun must still a thousand years go round

Before common sense on earth will abound.

Does J. E. C. mean to confine the idea of power to mind or intelligence: to support the position of Bacon, that "knowledge is power," or means he to say, that where there is no knowledge, or intelligence; there can be "no power at all?"—if so, it is necessary to explain my idea of the word power.

Power in its strict and literal meaning is force; in this sense, the expression of Bacon, was no more than a figure of speech, and in fact, as used by him, was intended to shew the superiority of knowledge, in the political affairs of nations: with respect to production, generation, mind and motion; it is operation, process, and reflection which is concerned; which may, in common



parlance, be denominated *power*, although, in the strict language and principles of science, no force or power is engaged.

Physical power, I presume, cannot be what J. E. C. means by "almighty intelligent power," for he says, "such power once discovered or demonstrated, you will admit, all his attributes, such as infinite, or perfect wisdom, knowledge, goodness, &c." these attributes having reference to mental and not to physical properties.

I cannot suppose that J. E. C. would "roundly and roughly" maintain, that his supposed almighty intelligent power, is physically and mechanically engaged, in moulding and making matter, and in producing life, mind, and motion, by the application of physical means, and mechanical force, if he say (as most theologians would) certainly not; but that he (the intelligent power) causes, wills or ordains them; I ask, by what means? if he answer, by the instrumentality of the elements of nature, we approach very near to each other, in our conclusions, upon the *modus operandi*—by which life, mind, and motion, are produced and carried on; and our argument resolves itself simply, into the question, is there, or is there not, an almighty intelligent Being: the maker of matter; or is matter self existent; upon this subject, I have been so diffuse in my answers to I. G. that it might be deemed only necessary to refer to them.

However, as Materialists found their opinions upon the imperishable basis of nature and reason, according to the truth or the reality of things; I feel no objection to discuss the arguments or positions advanced by J. E. C.

This Gentleman has "promptly" asserted, that almighty power, without intelligence, is an absurdity; if we carry our ideas of almighty power, no farther than to the production, support and direction, of organized matter, mind and motion; if we limit the idea to whatever exists, and takes place in nature; then is J. E. C. in my opinion wrong in his conclusion; for nature is equal to, or almighty in, carrying forward all the stupenduous processes we can see, know, or understand—but if he goes out of nature, to account for those processes; he is but a visionary, and, like all metaphysicians, would lead us into a maze of difficulties, which neither he, or any one else, can overcome.

With respect to almighty power, I refer to that part of my argument in answer to I. G., wherein I say, that there is nothing *individually* almighty; the elements of nature in their combined operations upon each other, produce all things, life, mind, motion, and all the modifications and mutations of matter: in this sense, nature, in her collective or sole operations, is the producing and active cause of all things; and, if this is power, (but which I call process) then is nature all-powerful or almighty power, without intelligence to guide or direct.

With respect to intelligence, I have, in my last letter to I. G. shewn logically, that the elements of matter never had a begin-

ning, that they are eternal, that *man*, being a compound of the elements of matter, never had a beginning, therefore man must be eternal also, as part in genera species and class of the great family of nature; consequently, and necessarily, as it is a property of his nature to think, mind or intelligence is eternal: but it can only be so as or when connected with organized matter, and cannot effect a purpose or perform an operation, beyond the atmosphere of its organized existence; beyond the world in which it had and has its being; from which, however priests may preach, however fanatics pray, or metaphysicians may reason; it, nor any portion of it, can never depart, because it is a proved fact, that at a certain distance from the surface of the earth, the atmosphere becomes too attenuated for any living or organized being to exist, and that therefore before it could pass beyond the earth's atmosphere, it must cease to live; and by the natural principles of gravitation and attraction, must return to the earth to be decomposed and to be absorbed by the elements, of which it had always been a component part; and this is the effect which takes place at or after the death of every animated creature; all are resolved into the elements: and if this is the round which nature ever runs, on this terrestrial globe, it is reasonable to believe, that the same or similar effects, take place in every other planet on which animated nature and intelligence may exist.

Should the argument of classing man into genera and species as a component and inherent part of matter be objected to; I would refer to all animated nature which rises progressively to perfection, as the cat, the panther, and leopard, &c. to the tiger; the dog, the fox, &c. to the wolf and lion; the hog, the boar, the rhinoceras, &c. to the elephant; the monkey, ape, baboon, &c. to man; and who will deny that there are not several species of human beings differing in form, colour, and intelligence, dependant on the conformation of their organized parts for the difference we behold?

In other planets, there *may* exist minerals, vegetables, and animals, very different to any that exist on this globe, but their constituent principles must be the same, we cannot imagine a fifth element\*, nor amongst the animals that a sixth sense exists, or if we could fancy so, we can neither conjecture or describe what the additional element or sense can be.

Having defined my ideas in what consists almighty power, it will be seen that although I admit NATURE in a qualified sense, or in her collective operations, to be almighty; that I consider intelligence or mind, however almighty it may be in the exercise of imagination, being confined by its physical properties, is limited in its operative effects, and those effects are limited to the atmosphere in which it exists.

\* To say the elements are but four, was the philosophy of centuries ago, but will not suit the present time. The elements are infinite to human tact and comprehension.



I agree with J. E. C., that "any perfection argues a deficiency," but I do not agree that deficiency always argues controul, or a higher controuling power; for there may be many deficiencies occur in the processes of nature in which nothing of controul takes place, as it respects design or will: an acorn, for instance, may be sown, a tree may arise, but may be imperfect or deficient in its growth; in this case it is not controul, or a higher power which impedes its growth, but the absence of the necessary quantity of fertilizing matter, or a disease which stops its progress to perfection.

No one will deny the position of J. E. C., that it is *impossible* for anything "to be more powerful than *all* powerful, higher than the highest;" but the all powerful, or highest power, in the production of life, mind, and motion, and the modifications of matter, I presume, resides in the collective operations and productive properties of nature, or in the elements of matter, and then to be all-powerful, or the highest power; when influencing or operating upon the universe in toto, in which mind or intelligence is no ways concerned, in directing and overruling the operations carried forward; therefore it is process and not controul.

In the following observations J. E. C. becomes metaphysical, and "*enlists*" himself on the side of absurdity, when he says, "With respect to the *essence* of such *being*," (an almighty intelligent power) "I think the controversy cannot last long,

(a) for such being having the entire command and absolute power over all things (or rather he himself being the all in all) he *could* change the *appearances*, positions, or substances of things according to his will:

(b) thus, if annihilation is philosophically objectionable, he *could* resolve such substance, (if the term be more acceptable) into the substance of his own essence:

(c) now the *substance* or *essence* of such being *must ever* remain UNKNOWN." Concluding:

(d) "because there is nothing to fix it, himself alone can have a knowledge of it, *were it known* to any other being, he could not be almighty, as the limits of his power would be fixed and known,

(e) of consequence under restraint and dominion or subject to power above him."

And thus is exemplified the advantages of free discussion by developing "the baseless fabric" on which metaphysical speculators build their visionary doctrines of disembodied spirits, divine essences, and almighty intelligent power, and the means which the learned take to entangle the judgment of the unlearned, with respect to subjects, which divert their minds from their vital concerns and essential interests.

But that I may not be charged with calling an argument fallacious, without endeavouring to prove it to be so, I have divided the foregoing quotations into sections, and marked them with the

five first letters of the alphabet, in which order I proceed to make my comments.

(a) How can J. E. C. tell, that a being which *must ever* remain UNKNOWN, "has the entire command and absolute power over all things, being all in all," is it not *absurd* to talk of the absolute power of an imaginary something of which we know nothing?

(b) J. E. C. seems fully aware, that to talk of annihilation, is not only unphilosophical, but unscientific, and that the thing is impossible, therefore irrational. What does J. E. C. mean when he says, "he (the almighty intelligent power) could resolve such substance (the substance of things) into the *substance* of his own *essence*?" Is J. E. C. a Materialist or an immaterialist, is substance essence, and essence substance?

(c) I cannot expect that J. E. C. can tell, of what essence or substance the thing to which he alludes, is composed, as (it)

(d) himself (the being) can *alone* have a knowledge of it, but why, if it were known to any other being, he could not be *almighty*; I am not metaphysician enough clearly to understand, or why the limits of *power* would be fixed, and under restraint and dominion, or subject to a power above it, because it might be known; seems extraordinary, and is to suppose, that the angels spoken of in the Jew book, are not acquainted with the profound secret, and therefore in point of knowledge little superior to us "poor mortals."

Is knowledge of such a dangerous nature, as to deprive supreme intelligence of power? If so, no wonder that the "poor mortals," Adam and Eve, were so dreadfully punished for tasting of the tree of knowledge; or if so, then was Bacon a more literal and correct philosopher than I was aware of when he declares that "knowledge is power?" But I never before understood, till illumined by J. E. C., that knowledge could subject the "almighty intelligent being" of theologians "to *restraint* and dominion;" however, as it is said that he is all in all, *impossible* to be excelled in excellence, power, or wisdom, and *impossible* to be known, the two impossibilities may amount to a third and fourth impossibility.

It is impossible to know that an almighty intelligent being does exist, and impossible to "*unravel* and *elucidate*," the mysterious doctrines of theologians, and metaphysicians, concerning disembodied spirits, and divine essences.

I agree also with J. E. C., that "there are many things inexplicable," such as many of the dogmas of visionaries, as well as many of the unlimited operations of nature; "which our capacity cannot compass; but we have always this consolation, that by a close observation and investigation of the operations of nature, mankind do "*unravel* and *elucidate*" from time to time, principles before unknown, or little understood, which tends to prove that NATURE is all in all.

As to the "consolation that such a power (an almighty intelli-



gent power) can never be its own enemy, or be the enemy of any of his own works; which by an abuse of *his* gifts, or a perversion of their powers, deserves not *his* enmity," I shall take up little time in discussing, because, in my opinion, it has never been proved that such power exists.

I look upon the moral observations of J. E. C. as savouring of the cant of the times, and the necessary consequence of errors and prejudices, which have been impressed upon the human mind during many ages of delusion, craft and fraud; and which will probably take several ages more totally to eradicate; but respecting God being the enemy of his own works; were we to take the Mosaical history as a criterion, and admit that the supposed being foreknew all things that would happen; that he is omnipotent, and omnibeneficent, there are many things related therein, and many things which happen in every age, which cast at least a doubt upon the assumption of J. E. C., about not being the enemy of his own works; can we paint any thing more cruel to mental feelings, than that of driving the first pair from a peaceful, plentiful, primeval garden, into a solitary wilderness of thorns and briars; of drowning a thousand millions of human beings, and myriads of millions of animals; to replenish the earth again, with pain, disease, misery, want, and woe? How, it may be asked, could the thousands of millions of slaughtered human beings, victims of state cupidity and turpitude, have deserved his enmity, where was his mercy, justice, or wisdom, in suffering so much evil and wretchedness to prevail, when, by his supposed power and goodness, he could have prevented it?

The fact is, that good and evil, as relative to the feelings, passions, and senses of animal life, are qualities inherent in nature, and in many respects unavoidable, as is metaphorically shewn, by the fable of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, described in the Jew book. All doctrines that profess the contrary, are spurious, fallacious, and visionary: the only remedy which mankind can apply to the evils which surround and distress them, is temperance, soberness, discretion and moral rectitude.

Equal, natural, and social justice, and the destruction of all state tyrants, as they appear, and oppress the people.

After several preliminary observations, J. E. C. comes to the question, whether matter with "nothing like intelligence connected with it, could produce an intellectual being," insinuating (if I mistake him not) that it is a position of mine, that it could, or at least, that my arguments imply as much; but which I deny, because, for many years, seeing that all nature is divided into genera, class, and species, I have held, that man, being a generic part of nature, coevil or co-eternal with matter; MIND is an inherent property of organized matter, and *also* eternal, consequently, that matter is connected with intellect.

"For whether intellect depends on organization, or on an orga-

nized nervous system, nay, whether intelligence is acquired, or innate, it makes no difference, the connection is apparent, the identity is insisted on, that intellect "or mind is matter."

"Again, matter (or the elements) as the sole eternal all of nature," is, or are, the self-operating and producing cause or causes of all things, and have the properties of producing amongst other things, organized and intellectual beings; "man himself being the example and proof," and as being part and parcel of the elements of nature, must have been eternally intelligent, but has no power over the profound processes of nature\*.

For certain "particles being susceptible of animation and intelligence," it does not necessarily follow, that they have any controlling power or influence over other parts; *mind* not being the principle from which organization takes place, certain processes and modifications of the elements being the causes of life and mind; and the changes, matter is perpetually undergoing, and must be undergoing, through all duration, justify SHELLY in saying:—

"There is not one atom of yon earth,  
But what was once living man;  
Nor the minutest drop of rain,  
That hangeth in its thinnest cloud,  
But flowed in human veins."

Because all these belong to the atmosphere of this globe, are constantly intermingling, and in the progress of ten million billion revolving suns, and ten times ten billion trillion modifications of its particles; the same processes produce the same effects, and the same particles must come into contact with each other, the *laws* of nature are invariable, the elements obey, and produce and reproduce *ad infinitum*.

But not "one speck of yon ethereal sky,"  
Has *tasted* of *earthly* vitality.

Because whatever may happen to be the particles which compose the sky (if it contains any particles) not belonging to the atmosphere of the earth; they cannot come in contact with human beings, consequently, cannot once have been part of "living man" nor can they ever have flowed in human veins, or tasted of earthly vitality†.

Having, in this letter and in my last to I. G. endeavoured logically to prove, that man is part and parcel of nature, and by certain modifications of matter, by the means or instrumentality of certain organs, and vessels, possesses mind or intelligence; *ergo* it is a property of matter, under certain modifications of its elements, to

\* It was correctly stated by Strabo, that man is not a reasonable animal, but an animal capable of cultivating, or of producing reason.

R. C.

† If planet communicates motion to planet, it must be by an interchange of matter or material force; therefore the matter of a planet is not confined within its atmosphere.

R. C.



be intelligent, consequently, the elements in their actions upon each other, do produce intelligent beings, limited in power and will, but illimitable in speculative and creative imagination, and these I have shewn must have the eternal property of producing life, mind, and motion; not universally at one and the same time, but sequentially, as matter forms itself, into organic structure by certain processes, or actings upon itself; not "every atom" at the same time being "intellectual," but only as it becomes organized or acquires vessels and substances proper for the exercise of thought, will, and judgment, which constitute intelligence: and as the organization is most complete, so is mind most adapted, to be most perfect, in the exercise of its reason and judgment; myriads of these organized beings, dependant upon the elements for vitality, and all the functions of life may exist at one and the same time.

But no particular "independant or supreme" unlimited being can exist, nor can there be an *intelligent* eternal *almighty* power, because intelligence without matter "is an absurdity, man himself being the evidence and proof," and because matter, whether liquid aeriform or solid, being continually in a progress of change; it follows that all beings are mutable, and that no changing intelligent unfixed *being* can be *almighty*.

There can be nothing almighty unless it be the sole of nature, in its collective elementary operative effects.

The *elements* "collectively" have the *property* of producing a great variety of beings, animate, sensitive, and thinking, which generate their own individual species to infinity, but none of them can, nor can they collectively, produce an infinite, eternally intelligent, being; because what they do produce that hath life, are composed of their substances, possessing the same homogeneous qualities, and circumscribed in power and duration, and subject to decomposition.

All animated, sensitive, and thinking matter, at certain periods of its existence, undergoes the process of decomposition, and as nothing that can be decomposed can be infinite, almighty, and eternal; and as nothing unorganized, can be animate, sensitive, or intellectual; "matter, as a unique or sole existence," is *not* an intelligent power or being, nor is it resolvable "into one power dependant on will," because matter as a sole, does not possess will; therefore it is *futile* and *useless* to enquire about the difference between the essence and spirit, and substance of a supposed almighty being, because the *ignis fatuus* will always elude, as it always has eluded the search of every finite being, however intense, ardent, or sanguine, may be the notion, that any such supposed being does exist.

Having endeavoured to shew, that THE ELEMENTS in operation ARE NATURE, and that life, mind, and motion, are inherent properties and part of the integer of nature; it seems useless to follow

J. E. C. "through all his metaphysical windings," but as he might charge upon me, a desire to evade, what he may consider his most cogent reasoning, I will proceed in my arduous task, and as J. E. C. is no ordinary reasoner, but "by the multitude of his turnings," might confuse and embarrass some of his readers; I will endeavour to "unravel" his knotty arguments; and in doing so, I shall again quote his words, that he may be convinced, that I am no way desirous of blinking the subject, and divide them into sentences, and shall mark them, the better to shew their fallacy.

After urging an examination of his reasons J. E. C. proceeds to say:—

A. "Again, Sir, I believe you will find, independent of any consideration of intellectual beings, subject to the laws of nature, or without referring thereto, there *must* be an intellectual or vital energy presiding *above* all nature;

B. for, let the processes of nature be explored to infinity, reason, unbiassed reason, or common sense, or ordinary sense, will tell you, that, that which has no inherent energy, or vital spring of action, or has not life; moves or acts by compulsion.

C. Examine every minute of nature separately, ask what gives them their forms, their qualities. their motions, or their powers, D. you will find that what they receive is from compulsion, what they give is by compulsion; if they move, if they meet, it is not by choice; for they have none; if they are stationary, it is the same, one thing impels another, perhaps beyond the reach of finite capacity to ascertain.

E. But still there cannot be an endless system of dependance, without support; an endless chain of effects without a cause, an endless system of compulsion without a power to compel,

F. therefore, there must be a vital upholding energy; G. of course, possessing *intellect, freedom, will*, a fount or infinitude of power; H. and this power includes, or rather gives, communicates, or resumes, all physical power; I. hence, that which is not inherent vitality and uncontrollable energy, must be subject, or passive.

J. Thus *intellectual* power is the *sole* and *only actual* power. K. Physical power is a secondary, a communicated or appointed power.

L. Thus, Sir, I flatter myself, I must have satisfactorily proved *a posteriori* the existence of an eternal almighty intelligent being."

It will be seen that J. E. C. in his arguments, refers to principles which are undeniable, and ingeniously applies those principles in support of his favourite hypothesis, the existence of an *almighty, intelligent, eternal* maker and director of all things, the author of life, mind, and motion; it will be my business to shew, with all the perspicuity, his arguments admit; wherein his applications and conclusions are erroneous.

A. In the course of the arguments used by myself in my letters



in answer to I. G., and in this I have endeavoured to shew, that there cannot be any "intellectual or vital energy presiding *above all nature*," but on the contrary, that in the elements, and in the actions and counteractions of the elements, resides all energy; B. for let the progress of nature be diligently and carefully examined, it will appear to scientific minds, unbiassed by prejudice, that they proceed from an inherent energy, or property contained in matter; not by mental compulsion, but physical necessity, from the operations of the elements: C. the forms, the qualities, the motions, and the powers of all things are derived, or derivable, from matter in motion, or the elements acting upon themselves.

D. What they receive, or what they give, when they move, when they meet, is *not* by choice, but necessity; for unorganized matter has no choice, and intelligent matter is necessarily governed by propensity of passion, sense, desire, surrounding circumstances and its inherent properties, one thing impelling another *beyond* the power of *finite* capacity to describe; but as an instance that it does so, take the following:—

Individuality of interests, impel men of the same calling, or trade, to vie with each other for superiority; to the love of lucre, to competition, to opposition, to contention, to enmity, to hatred, to malice, to abuse, to passion, to blows, to murder, or death.

Whereas, on the contrary, unity of interests, call up friendly feelings, mutual assistance, forbearance, esteem, regard, courtesy, urbanity, benevolence, confidence, friendship, and happiness.

Thus might be multiplied, *ad infinitum*, the truism, that one thing impels another through all human affairs, and through all nature.

E. There *cannot* be an endless system of dependance without support, an endless chain of effects without a cause, an endless system of necessity without a power to necessitate; F. therefore *there must* be an operating energy; G. of *course*, an infinite principle, of life, mind, and motion, H. including communicating with, and resuming or absorbing all physical properties of matter.

I. Hence, inherent vitality and uncontrollable energy, reside in the great integer, or sole of nature: J. thus the elements, and actions of the elements, are the actual cause of all the major and minor effects produced upon matter, K. which may be denominated natural or elementary process, and production; but not an *appointed*, communicated, and secondary source of all things, but the self-existent, original, eternal source of all things, without any reference to, or connection with, any supernatural, intelligent agent whatever. I admit "that something must have existed eternally; that what eternally existed must be without cause;" and "that plurality of power, and restraint of power, imply superior

power; "but I have my doubts, that the something which existed eternally *must* be infinite or illimitable, although I admit SPACE and DURATION to be immeasurable; but space and duration are not matter, therefore cannot be denominated something; and plurality of power requires explanation, because the elements, in their conjoint operations, possess plurality of power; but there is nothing superior to *nature* as a unique, or as the *principium rei totus*, that man can discover or describe; yet, with this certainty of his incapacity to go beyond the bounds of nature, visionaries and metaphysicians are constantly bewildering themselves in a maze of inexplicable difficulties.

"*Intellect*, as being a principle" inherent to organized, animalized, and sensitive matter, "*could not begin* to exist, but *must* have existed eternally,"—man having *intellect*, being organized, sensitive, and animate; and in species a part of nature, composed of the elements of matter, and at his dissolution again absorbed into the *totus substantia* of the elements: therefore, man must have existed eternally, and consequently intellect, as peculiar to his nature, must be eternal.

Matter, or the elements in their operations upon each other, as the cause or *modus* of organized existence, having eternally had the property "to produce intellectual beings," it does not follow that the elements, or nature in its, or their, unorganized state, as a unique or *substantia sole*, is itself, or themselves, intellectual; because matter has no vessels (*as a sole*) of sensation to cause mind, nor sensorium on which to exercise thought; nevertheless, matter contains within itself all the principles of life, mind, and motion; life and mind only commencing, as certain portions of matter become modified into organic structure. These processes being known to exist, and to have existed to the remotest period, of which mankind have any records, it is reasonable to believe, that matter, life, mind, and motion, must have existed from all eternity, and that the causes of life, mind, and motion, and the composition, decomposition, and recomposition, of the multitudinous forms of matter, reside in the combined operations of the elements.

Again, I admit that liberty of action, would be a consequence of unique, or sole existence, *if* no bar, no hindrance, existed; but as I have shewn, that nature, as a unique, or sole, is not intellectual, it is not *liberty* of action which takes place in her operations, but process necessitated by process, *ad infinitum*.

I also admit, that "where there is negation of all restraint, unimpeded operation is the consequent, from which ensues all *possible* effects," all the productive and operative means of life, mind, and motion, and all the modifications and mutations of matter; to all the extent which nature admits, or that is *possible*, "and nothing is more possible and certain than" life, mind, and motion; and,



however by progressive means, or however inferior the beings may be, by which life, mind, and motion, may be acquired, "where but one source exists, from that source it must come"

Thus, Sir, have I endeavoured to examine the arguments of J. E. C. "with precision, with a mind as cool as alpine snows, serene as the autumnal eve," and with a scrutiny as intense as the torrid zone; and thus, Sir, I flatter myself have I shewn, that J. E. C.'s *a posteriori* reasoning, upon the existence of an eternal, almighty, intelligent being, though very ingenious and powerful, is nevertheless very metaphysical, illusory, and deceptive, as being contrary to truth or reality of things, and to the principles and processes of nature; which, therefore, I expect true science and sound philosophy will reject as prejudice and superstition give way to common sense and reason; and when the cupidity and moral turpitude of priests, and cabinets, give way to the prevailing influence of public opinion.

I am aware, that the votaries of religion, revelation, mystery, and miracle; the evangelical canters about gospel truths, and divine grace, are under great alarm about the fate of their Diana, and pretend to fear that the progress of *infidelity* will so demoralize mankind, that, giving full scope to their passions, they will set the world on fire, or once more will call down the *destructive vengeance* of a *merciful* God: however, as I am not afflicted with any superstitious qualms, and believe, that no evils can be entailed on mankind so mischievous and injurious as hypocrisy, priestly deception, and fraud, and the perversion of every manly, generous, and natural feeling; or bigotry, persecution, and cruelty. I have ventured to strike at the root of these evils, under the confidence that were mankind weaned entirely from every species of idolatry, their manners and virtues would greatly improve, because religion is not morality, although priests have taken care to connect it in the name of all religions, well knowing, that such is the love of mankind for moral virtues, and moral rectitude, that had they not done so, no religion could exist a century, hence I have no fear, in taking away the main prop of idolatry, that mankind would be a jot less moral than they are at this moment; whereas, cant, hypocrisy, superstition, bigotry, persecution, and cruelty, for matters of religious opinions, would receive their death blow.

For myself, as an individual, I feel indebted to J. E. C. for contending the point, as it has been the means of strengthening, and confirming more decidedly, my mind upon long entertained opinions, and of making known the principles upon which Materialists (or Atheists if he pleases) erect their doctrine, that NATURE IS ALL IN ALL.

I have in the course of my observations, and arguments, made use of many words and sentences used by J. E. C., not from any invidious feelings, but because, in several instances, I have preferred them for strength and point, to any I could substitute, and

because I wished to refute his arguments as nearly in the same language as his own, as the subject would admit.

I again thank you, Sir, for introducing the controversy into your valuable publication, the only vehicle of free discussion upon theological visions, extant.

I remain, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

J. WATSON.

### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A FRIEND.

YOUR correspondent J. E. C. says:—"If your friend condescends to *enter the lists*, he may see at once what he has to oppose.

1. Something has existed from all eternity.
2. All power has been from eternity.
3. There can be but one independent existence.
4. What has not self-direction and disposal cannot be independent.
5. That which has not vitality cannot have self-direction, or disposal."

To this, you reply: "Your first four propositions are granted."

You are always getting yourself into difficulties and giving advantages to your opponents by your admissions.

I am not disposed to "*enter the lists*," I should think I was losing my time sadly, if I were to consume it in an attempt to refute the false reasoning of J. E. C. Were I disposed to spend my time on the subject, I think it would be much better employed in composing an essay or two, than in squabbling with J. E. C.

Your admission was wrong. Have you any clear idea of eternity? I have none whatever.

Do you know the meaning of the word? I do not. To me it seems a word which can convey no idea, and has consequently no meaning. It is a word, which like several others, has been invented to cover our ignorance.

Try every definition of the word you can find, or can conceive, and then ask yourself if you have an intelligible idea. If you take pains and examine yourself closely, you will find, that it is a vague general term, totally devoid of meaning. J. E. C. is then only wandering, and his postulates, *one* and *two*, are absurd.

In his *third* postulate he says, "there can be but one *independent* existence." This he endeavours to explain by a sad jumble of words, of which I cannot collect the meaning. Sure enough I am, that he knew not what he meant when he wrote them. He assumes a logical form, and thinks he is reasoning. There is however nothing but form, for reason he does not.



"*Independent existence*," must mean, if it can mean any thing, existence independent of motives and circumstances. This is not conceivable. "*Independent existence*" is then as absurd as "*eternity*," and, as this includes the two following postulates, they are all equally absurd. I do not mean to offend either you or your correspondent by the manner in which I express myself; you, however, know this very well. And your unknown correspondent, ought to be satisfied, with my having refused *to enter the lists* with any one who can be satisfied with stringing together a number of unmeaning words, and can, in conclusion, say, he "has resorted to no pre-supposition, and to no inference,"

Pray ask Mr. Penny to give a definition of the word MIND. In his essay he uses the word as if it conveyed a clear idea, recognized by all. We are, it is true, familiar with the word, and this seems to have been the reason he has used it, but until he shall have the goodness to define it, there may be some discrepancies in consequence of some of us thinking he means one thing, and others of us thinking he means another thing.

Your reprint of Mr. Pole's paper will I hope be useful, it is an excellent paper. I will just add by way of supplement, that, notwithstanding the common talk of children being marked with mice, and other animals, and of monstrous births, such as a child with a dog's head, or feet, &c., that I never was able to discover in any child, or foetus any such marks or parts. There are many hundreds of abortions, and mal-formed foetuses, in our Hospitals in London, but I am not aware that any one of them has any part decidedly resembling any animal, except the human animal. And I am of opinion, that no child was ever produced with any such part, or parts.

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NOTE BY R. CARLILE, ON THE CONTRO-  
VERSY WITH J. E. C.

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THE volubility without clearness, and the authority without justness, which J. E. C. assumes in his letters, render it necessary that he should be brought back and fixed to the merits of the question at issue: that question is: *whether there be, or be not, an intelligent power superior to man; and, if there be, can man know any thing of it, so as to justify him in speaking or writing of it, or in observing a form of worship towards it.* J. E. C. asserts that there is such

an intelligent power; but he evades the only test by which it can be known: such as, *what is intellect—whence does it arise—and to what known object is it confined?* Here it is necessary, to fair controversy, that J. E. C. should exhibit intellect in an existence distinct from the animal world; for, unless he does this, he does nothing for his argument.

We also disagree as to the difference of *Almighty Being* and *Almighty Power*. I begin to look at both as very foolish expressions; and I acknowledge, that I have used the latter as a compendious expression for all existing power or force: whilst I have been taught to look at his Almighty Being with the attribute of intellect, as an idol of the imagination, a burlesque imitation of human power, such as is represented in the Jew and Christian Books.

I declare before all mankind, that I desire nothing so much as instruction; I declare that I am wedded to no opinions, and that I look upon all as the most mutable of all things; and properly so mutable, as they ought to be changed as often as new experimental facts unfold new ideas.

J. E. C. has therefore to shew me two things:

1st. *That intellect is, or can be, known as an existence distinct from animals.*

2d. *That all power or force must be intelligent power or force.* Until he can do this, he has no claim to further notice upon this head of controversy: for a mere contention for the last word is an object I wish to make unworthy of these pages.

I am willing to give up the use of the words *almighty power*, if any one thinks them disputable. I set no value upon them whatever: for I confess, that I have no clear idea of power, but as relatively great or small: and my only definition of *almighty power* is *all or every known power or force*. I use it not as a matter for veneration; but as a mere convenient expression. I give it neither figure, attribute, or local habitation: and henceforth I renounce the use of such a term.

Another erroneous reasoning of J. E. C. is, that intellect



is a prior existence attached to each animal organization; but experience shews us, that it is not a distinct existence, but a mental force growing out of these organizations: and from this error he reasons to, or imagines, a power that can bottle intellect and dispense it where it pleases.

I now call upon him to come back to the real question at issue, which, I presume, is plainly set forth in this note: though I expect to hear that it does not correspond with that peculiar vocabulary in use by J. E. C.

If my recollection be clear, I have printed every article sent me by J. E. C. except the last dated Dec. 15; and the only clear and intelligible sentence in that paper, I have noticed here, relating to intellect as a distinct existence. His *forte* is to carry on a string of argument upon suppositions; I desire to keep him to positive facts and known existences: and unless I can do this, I am sensible how tedious such a desultory controversy must become to the readers of "The Republican." I have preserved J. E. C.'s last paper: if he complains of non-insertion it shall be inserted.

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### BIBLICAL ANECDOTES; OR, "THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART."

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#### No. 1, JOAB.

- 1, ABNER, Captain of Saul's Host.—2 *Samuel* chap. ii. ver. 8.
- 2, Joab, Captain of David's Host.—*Do.* ver. 17, and chap. 8, ver. 16.
- 3, David sends a flag of truce, and makes a great feast for Abner, and orders Joab to slay him.—*Do.* chap. xxiii. ver. 20, 24.
4. David orders Joab to put Uriah into the front of the battle that he may be slain—and fornicates with his wife.—*Do.* chap. 11.
5. David removes Joab, and appoints Amasa in his stead.—*Do.* chap. xvii. ver 25.
6. Joab slays Absalom (David's son *by his master's order*).—*Do.* chap 18. For which
7. David orders him to kill Amasa, and replaces him in his military office.—*Do.* chap. xx.

## CATASTROPHE.

After having given thanks to Jehovah for his manifold mercies, "in making his life so spotless and void of reproach, and for giving him the victory over all his enemies," David dies—and just before he goes off (having sung one of his psalms) says to Solomon:—

"Moreover, thou knowest what Joab, the son of Zerniah, did unto the two Captains of the hosts of Israel, Abner and Amasa, and unto Absalom my son, and unto Uriah, the Hittite, whom he slew.

"Do, therefore, according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoary head go down in peace to the Grave." 1 *Kings* chap. ii. ver. 5 and 6.

So Solomon, "being full of the grace of the Lord," orders Joab to the bow string: "for his mercy endureth for ever."

## No. 2, SHIMEI.

1. "Shimei cursed David."—2 *Samuel* chap. xiv. ver. 5.

2. "Therefore, (*i. e.* because Shimei had joined in David's triumphal procession from Gideon.) David said unto Shimei, the son of Gera, thou shalt not die: and the king swore 'unto him.'"—*Do.* chap. xix. ver. 23.

## CATASTROPHE.

*Scene, David's death bed.*

DAVID TO SOLOMON.

3. "And behold, thou hast with thee, Shimei, the Son of Gera, who cursed me when I went down into Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordon, and I swore unto him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the Sword.

"Now, therefore, my Son, hold THOU him not guiltless, (for thou art a wise man, and knowest what oughtest to be done unto him) but his hoar head bring THOU down to the grave WITH BLOOD." 1 *Kings* chap. ii. ver. 8 and 9.

## No. 3, SAUL.

1. Saul "compareth and imagineth the death of" David.—1 *Samuel* chap. 18.

2. David swears to pardon him.—*Do.* chap. 19.

## CATASTROPHE.

3. As a last proof of his "dying in the Lord," David, immediately previous to his joining his friend, Jehovah, in his heaven, orders two of *Saul's* sons, and five of his GRAND-CHILDREN, to be hanged: "for his oath to Saul was to spare HIM;" but did not extend to HIS ISSUE, though they were not born at the time of Saul's conspiracy.

And the Lord saw it all, and behold "It was all very good."



## TO THE EDITOR OF THE REPUBLICAN.

SIR,

Edinburgh, Dec. 21, 1823.

BEING a real friend to the cause of truth, it gives me pain when I see this cause in any degree injured by those who are at the same time anxious to befriend it: this reflection has been suggested to my mind by reading the "*Observations on the Instructions given by Jesus Christ*," by Robert Affleck, inserted in your Republican of the 12th, Dec. current.

It appears to me that unbelievers are held in abhorrence by the ignorant portion of professing Christians, merely because these poor deluded creatures have got the notion that "infidels" totally reject and despise every portion of the Bible: now, seeing that the Bible contains a mixture of truth and falsehood, and that all rational individuals must necessarily respect the truth wherever it appears, it naturally follows, that a portion of the Bible is true and undisputed, and consequently respected by all. It is unnecessary for me to enter into any discussion upon the proportion which the truth may bear to the falsehood; if the book contains one sentence of truth, then I consider it to be the interest of all unbelievers, that *their respect* for this sentence should be known.

I know that the terms, believer and unbeliever, ought to be reversed, because I find that "infidels" generally exhibit in *their actions* a belief of all the valuable portions of the Bible, while the "believers" as generally manifest in their daily practice a total unbelief of all these valuable, practical doctrines of the Bible, while, as it were, to atone for this, they make a great fuss about believing its absurdities. We all know that the "saints" are most admired by those who know least about them, while regarding infidels, the case is directly reversed. We all know that the *Constitutional Association* cannot believe in the doctrine which teaches us, "to do unto others as we would wish others to do unto us," because they have cast many into prison for expressing their opinions, while, regarding *their own opinions*, they have not even been satisfied with the privilege which they have denied to them.

Now it appears to me, that the "friends of persecution" have been able to accomplish so much, chiefly because they have been successful in making the populace believe, that infidels reject the plain, useful, rational doctrine, which the Bible contains; and I am always sorry when I see the friends of mental liberty aiding them in the propagation of this delusion. To talk of "believing" or "denying" the Bible appears to me equally absurd, and to "embrace" or "reject" Christianity, I view in the same light; because both of these words include a great deal of *directly opposite* matter. If you mix a bushel of beans with a bushel of wheat,

how long might we dispute before we became unanimous in the idea, that the compound was one substance. Now, while it is evident, that the enemies of truth are always most successful while they contrive to keep the public in the belief that this mixture is one substance, I hope that the friends of truth will no longer hurt their own cause, by aiding their enemies in this inglorious undertaking: and it should be recollected, that this cannot be done more effectually than by denying, *that justice* to the opposite parts to which the truth of their doctrines is entitled.

It is upon this ground that I consider that nothing which has appeared in the Republican, written by a "believer," has been so injurious to the cause of truth as Mr. Affleck's observations. Instead of attacking the clear and palpable errors, he has not even taken the book *in the gross*, he has selected the *best part* of the Bible for his attack, and this part he has treated unfairly; because he affirms that Jesus Christ did not forbid assassination and murder, robbery and plunder, and a great many other similar crimes. Now if Mr. Affleck will turn to that text which says, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets," he will find that this simple rule contains *every omission* which he ascribes to Jesus Christ, and it surely is nothing against a law, to be short, comprehensive, intelligible, and of easy application. It appears to me extremely unfair to any character to bring forward the *crimes* which he did not condemn, and urge these omissions *as evidence that the individual approved of them*. The best character that the world ever produced, might be blackened upon this principle. Instead of separating the "beans" from the "wheat," and shewing that the former is materially different from the latter; Mr. Affleck seems anxious to prove, that "wheat" is "beans," because it has been unluckily mixed with them. I trust that the friends of truth will always be on their guard to make a complete separation of truth from error before the latter be knocked down, lest along with an enemy they wound

A FRIEND.



## JUSTICE OF JEHOVAH.

IN THE 2 THESSALONIANS, CHAP. ii. VER. 11, 12, AND 13, IS  
THE FOLLOWING BEAUTIFUL DOCTRINE.

“AND for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.”

Is it possible for the human imagination to picture a being more abhorrent to humanity than the above? He first forces men to believe a lie; and then damns them to all eternity for not believing the truth! He is to be thanked and applauded for his favours to a set of men who have never done any thing to merit them, but merely because it was his whim to elect them from all eternity to be his companions, without knowing whether they are to be rogues or honest men. But if the above be his true character, the greater the rogue the more fit would he be for the company of such a being. What a pity it is that some bishop of the present day does not manufacture a more perfect and consistent God for the Christians to idolize. I am confident the thing might be done with success. As for instance, if I were a bishop, I would write a book which should be the delineation of a pure and perfect God; or as perfect as I could make him. I would point out some residence for him. Perhaps the *sun* would be as good as any; or, I think, it would be best to say, that the *sun was God*; because some very plausible arguments might be brought forward in support of such doctrine. Well, after I had finished God, I would set about making a perfect code of morals. Here I would exert my utmost skill, and set at rest all objections and quibbling on this head. I would make them pure and perfect, according to the present received opinion on this most important of all subjects. The purity of my God should surpass that of Shelley's Prometheus; and the purity of his moral laws should be as immaculate as those practised by his LAON and CYTHNA. With such a God, and with such a code of morals, I should have but little to fear from the *infidel* and *blasphemer*, because I should have tangible ground to stand on. The thing altogether would not admit of demonstration, but there would be no wickedness about it. Though half of it may be ideal, the other half would be real and

defensible, which is not the case with the present system of faith.

After the book was written, the question would be, what is to be done with it? This is what I would do, I would give out, by the means of a flaming letter, that through the goodness of Almighty God to us poor mortals here below, he had caused to be found the original manuscript account of his life and laws, written by himself, and that the present scriptural writings were spurious fabrications of some wicked designing priests of olden times. I would take care to have all the bishops on my side, and I would venture my life that with their assistance the story would be swallowed by the whole Christain world. We should then see Christians burning the Bible with the same degree of savage joy which they have formerly shown when burning the books of some eminent philosopher, because his opinions did not accord with this same Bible. Men who have a swallow fitted for the Bible, would stick at nothing, however monstrous it may appear to other people. If the priests were to tell them that the welkin was a vast balloon made of blue silk, and the earth its car, they would believe it with avidity, and for this reason, because the priests said so.

It is surprising to me that the clergy of the present day do not see the necessity of inventing some new system of religion more consonant with the knowledge of the age; for they must see that the present system must fall ere long. It is said, that the moral precepts in the New Testament are beautiful, even by men who have cast all religion aside, but I cannot find a single sentence or precept but what may be far better expressed by the moral writers of the present day.

JOHN JONES.



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*N. B. Advertisements will be received, addressed as above, and inserted on the Covers of the "ARTISAN."*

December 13, 1823.



THE CAPTIVE.

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HAIL child of truth! hail glorious woman!  
Whom tyranny could not subdue;  
Since all the pow'rs that she could summon,  
Were baffled, and defied by you.

What tho' the Christian bigots blame thee,  
What tho' they frown upon thee still;  
While truth is thine they cannot shame thee,  
Rail and bluster how they will.

Tho' bars on ev'ry side surround thee,  
Tho' bolts of steel thy limbs confined;  
The knaves must leave thee as they found thee,  
No Jailor can lock up the mind!

Ah! great was my surprise rely on't,  
When I beheld thy slender form;  
"Is this," methought, "the mighty giant,  
That battl'd in the *legal* storm!"

"And was it she that brav'd the fury,  
Of the ruthless bench and bar,  
And scorn'd the verdict of a jury,  
*Empanell'd* for religious war!"

When from thy presence I retired,  
A sigh escap'd, perhaps a tear,  
And while thy courage I admired,  
Some genius thus address'd my ear:—

"And they are Christians that retain her,  
Beneath oppression's iron rod;  
But innocence, and truth sustain her,  
Where *truth* is not, THERE IS NO GOD!

"That captive," said the friendly spirit,  
"With pallid cheeks, and tender frame,  
Has won the laurel wreath of merit,  
And purchased everlasting fame.

" For not a name in hist'ry's pages,  
 Shall be found more fair and bright,  
 Which may descend to future ages,  
 Than the name of—Susan Wright."

ALLEN DAVENPORT.

---

MARY ANN DAVENPORT TO MRS. WRIGHT, WITH  
 HALF A CROWN.

---

Tho' all attempts to find out God are vain,  
 How worlds could come by chance seems very odd;  
 My *ne plus ultra* is the works of Paine,  
 And Paine believed in, and adored, a God.